

institutions it accredits to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV, HEA programs conducts—during the interval between the agency’s award of accreditation or preaccreditation to the institution or program and the expiration of the accreditation or preaccreditation period—at least one unannounced on-site inspection at each institution that provides vocational education or training for the purpose of determining whether the institution has the personnel, facilities, and resources it claimed to have either during its previous on-site review or in subsequent reports to the accrediting agency;

(4) The accrediting agency—

(i) Monitors institutions or programs throughout the accreditation or preaccreditation period to ensure continuing compliance with the agency’s standards or criteria; and

(ii) Conducts special evaluations, site visits, or both, as necessary; and

(5) The accrediting agency regularly reevaluates institutions or programs that have been granted accreditation or preaccreditation.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

**§ 602.25 Substantive change.**

(a) To be listed by the Secretary as a nationally recognized accrediting agency, an institutional accrediting agency must demonstrate to the Secretary that it maintains adequate substantive change policies that ensure that any substantive change to the educational mission or program(s) of an institution after the agency has granted accreditation or preaccreditation to the institution does not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet the agency’s standards.

(b) The Secretary considers that an accrediting agency meets the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section if—

(1) The agency requires prior approval of the substantive change by the agency before the change is included in the agency’s previous grant of accreditation or preaccreditation to the institution; and

(2) The agency’s definition of substantive change includes, but is not limited to, the following types of change:

(i) Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution;

(ii) Any change in the legal status or form of control of the institution;

(iii) The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, in terms of either in the content or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the agency most recently evaluated the institution;

(iv) The addition of courses or programs at a degree or credential level above that included in the institution’s current accreditation or preaccreditation;

(v) A change from clock hours to credit hours or *vice versa*; and

(vi) A substantial increase in—

(A) The number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program; or

(B) The length of a program.

(c) The agency has discretion to determine the procedures it will use to grant prior approval of the substantive change, which may, but need not, require an on-site evaluation before approval is granted.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

**§ 602.26 Required accreditation standards.**

(a)(1) To be listed by the Secretary as a nationally recognized accrediting agency, an accrediting agency must demonstrate to the Secretary that its accreditation or preaccreditation standards, or both, are sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the agency is a reliable authority as to the quality of the education or training provided by the institutions or programs it accredits.

(2) For a programmatic accrediting agency that does not serve as an institutional accrediting agency for any of the programs it accredits, the standards must address the areas contained in paragraph (b) of this section in terms of the type and level of the program rather than in terms of the institution.

(3) If none of the institutions an agency accredits participates in any Title IV, HEA program, or if the agency only accredits programs within institutions accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized